Prices of coconut and copra in Karnataka

3816. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has received any communication in the recent past from the Karnataka Government regarding declining prices of coconut and copra and the pest menace, which are being faced by the coconut growers of the State;

(b) whether the Minister has also received any communication from Members of Parliament, drawing his attention to the distressed conditions of coconut farmers of the State and asking for minimum support price for copra; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard and what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Government of Karnataka sought the financial assistance to control the mite infestation on coconut. An all party delegation headed by the Agricultural Minister, Government of Karnataka submitted a memorandum drawing attention to the distressed conditions of coconut farmers.

To control Eriophyid mite of coconut, Government of India released an amount of Rs. 7.40 crores to Government of Karnataka. Further to provide reasonable prices to the coconut farmers, Government of India has enhanced Minimum Support Price (MSP) during the 2001 season and National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) has so far procured a quantity of 4720 MTs of Ball Copra in Karnataka. Import duty on edible oils was also enhanced w.e.f. 1.3.2001.